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NEWS RELEASE

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R.I. SAT participation rate rises, scores decline AP participation rises in Rhode Island

Participation among Rhode Island students on the College Board SAT and AP exams is increasing, but SAT scores have declined this year, mirroring a national trend.

The participation rates on the SAT increased by one percentage point, to 65 percent, among last year's senior class, continuing a ten-year trend of rising participation rates among Rhode Island public-school students, according to a report that that College Board released today (September 24).

The Rhode Island participation rate was 14th in the country (tied with North Carolina).

On the SAT scale of 200 to 800, Rhode Island public-school seniors had a mean score of 477 in critical reading (down 5 points from 2011), 480 in math (down 2 points), and 470 in writing (down 4 points). The mean scores for all public-school students nationwide were 491 in reading (down 2 points), 505 in math (down 1 point), and 481 in writing (down 1 point).

“Although we had hoped to see an improvement in SAT scores across Rhode Island, we are encouraged that our SAT participation rate continues to improve,” said David V. Abbott, Acting Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education. “Participation rates in the SAT and AP exams are strong indications that many of our students are taking challenging courses that will prepare them for postsecondary education. We will continue working to ensure that all of our graduates are ready for success in college and in challenging careers.”

Among the New England states, Rhode Island ranks 5th in participation (ahead of Vermont) and in scores (ahead of Maine, which has 100-percent participation).

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Participation in AP exams by Rhode Island public-school students also continues a five-year improvement trend, according to results the College Board released today. During the previous (2011-12) school year, 3,456 Rhode Island public-school students (up 11.4 percent from 2010-11) took a total of 5,709 AP exams (up 15.2 percent). Nationally, the increase was 6.4 percent among test-takers and 7 percent among exams taken.

All but six Rhode Island high schools had at least some students take AP exams. With support from a foundation grant, the R.I. Department of Education (RIDE) has worked to improve AP participation, particularly in urban high schools.

Of the 5,709 AP exams Rhode Island public-school students took last year, 3,264 (57 percent) were scored 3 (out of 5) or better, which the College Board considers to be “an indicator of an ability to do successful work at most colleges.”

Attached to this news release is a table from the College Board showing participation and scores on the SAT and AP exams at each public Rhode Island high school.

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